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B I S H O P B U R N E T ' s

E X H O R T A T I O N

To all Mankind to Become

T R U L Y R E L I G I O U S,

Who ORDER'D it not to be P U B L I S H E D

Till after His Decease,

Which was on the 17th of M A R C H, 1714-15,
in the Seventy-second Year of His Age.

And by it He being Dead yet Speaketh, Heb. 11. 4.

I ADDRESS myself to Posterity, (as if I were Alive)
With that which is the most IMPORTANT
of All Other Things, and which ALONE will carry
every Thing along with it, which is to Recommend
in the most SOLEMN, and SERIOUS manner, the
STUDY and PRACTICE of RELIGION, to All
Sorts of Men, as that which is both the LIGHT of
the World Matt. 5. 14, and the SALT of the Earth,
Matt. 5. 13, Nothing does so open our Faculties, and
Compose and Direct the Whole Man, as an INWARD
Sense of GOD, of His AUTHORITY over Us, of
the LAWS He has set Us, of His Eye ever upon Us,
of His HEARING our Prayers, ASSISTING our
Endeavours, WATCHING over our Concerns, and
of HIS being to JUDGE, and to REWARD, or
PUNISH Us in another State, according to WHAT
we

We DO in This : Nothing will give a Man such a Detestation of Sin, and such a Sense of the GOODNESS of GOD, and of our Obligations to HOLINESS, as a RIGHT Understanding and a FIRM Belief of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION : Nothing can give a Man so calm a Peace within, and such a firm Security against all Fears and Dangers without, as the BELIEF of a kind and wise PROVIDENCE, and of a FUTURE STATE, an Integrity of Heart gives a Man a Courage and a Confidence that Cannot be shaken : A Man is sure that, by Living according to the Rules of RELIGION, He becomes the WISEST the BEST and HAPPIEST Creature, that He is Capable of being : HONEST INDUSTRY, the Employing His Time Well, and a constant SOBRIETY, and undefiled Purity and Chastity, with a quiet Serenity, are the best Preservers of Life and Health : So that take a Man as a single Individual, RELIGION is His GUARD, His PERFECTION, His BEAUTY and His GLORY : This will make Him the LIGHT of the World, shining BRIGHTLY, and ENLIGHTNING many round about Him : Then take a Man as a Piece of Mankind, as a Citizen of the World, or of any Particular State, RELIGION is indeed then the SALT of the Earth : For it makes every Man to be to all the rest of the World, whatsoever any one can with Reason wish or desire Him to be, He is True, Just, Honest, and Faithful in the whole

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Commerce of Life, Doing to all Others that which He would have Others do to Him : He is a Lover of Mankind, and of His Country : He may, and ought to LOVE some more than Others ; but he has an extent of LOVE to All, of Pity and Compassion not only to the poorest, but to the worst ; for the worse any are, they are the more to be pitied ; He has a Complacency and a Delight in all that are Truly, though but defectively GOOD, and a respect and Veneration for All that are Eminently so : He mourns for the Sins, and Rejoices in the Virtues of All that are round about Him : In every Relation of Life, Religion makes Him answer all His Obligations : It will make PRINCES JUST and GOOD, Faithful to their Promises, and Lovers of their People : It will Inspire Subjects with Respect, Submission, Obedience and Zeal for their PRINCE : It will sanctify Wedlock to be a State of Christian FRIENDSHIP, and mutual Assistance, It will give Parents the TRUEST Love to their Children, with a proper Care of their Education : It will Command the Returns of Gratitude and Obedience from Children : It will teach Masters to be Gentle and Careful of their Servants, and Servants to be Faithful, Zealous, and Diligent to their Masters concerns ; It will make Friends tender and true to one another ; It will make them Generous Faithful, and Disinterested ; It will make Men Live in their Neighbourhood as Members of one common

body

Body, Promoting first the General Good of the Whole, and then the Good of every Particular, as far as a Man's Sphere can go : It will make Judges and Magistrates Just and Patient, Hating Covetousness and Maintain Peace and good Order, without Respect of PERSCNS : It will make People live in so inoffensive a Manner, that it will be easy to maintain Justice, whilst Men are not disposed, to give Disturbance to those about them : This will make Bishops and Pastors faithful to their Trust, tender to their People, and watchful over them ; and it will Beget in the People an Esteem for their Persons and their Functions. Thus Religion, if truly received and sincerely adhered to, would prove the Greatest of All Blessings to a Nation : By Religion I understand somewhat more than the Receiving some Doctrines, though ever so true, or the professing them, and engaging to support them, Not without Zeal and Eagerness. What signify the best Doctrines, if Men do not Live suitably to them ; if they have not a due Influence upon their Thoughrs, their Principles, and their Lives : Men of Bad Lives, with Sound Opinions, are self-condemned, and lie under a highly aggravated Guilt : Nor will the Heat of a Party, arising out of Interest, and managed with Fury and Violence, compensate for the ill Lives of such false Pretenders to Zeal ; While they are a Disgrace to that, which they PROFESS and seem so hot for.

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By Religion, I do not mean an outward compliance with Form and Customs, in going to Church, to Prayers, to Sermons and to Sacraments, with an External shew of Devotion, Or, which is more, with some inward forced Good Thoughts, in which many may satisfy themselves, while this has no Force to subdue and rectify their Appetites, Passions and secret Designs. Those Customary Performances, how Good and Useful soever, when well understood and Rightly Directed, are of Little Value, when Men rest on them and think that, because they do them they have therefore acquitted themselves of their Duty, though they Continue still Proud, Covetous, full of Deceit, Envy and Malice: Even secret Prayer, the most effectual of all other Means, is designed for a higher End, which is to Possess our Minds with such a constant and present Sense of Divine Truths, as may make these Live in us, and govern us, and may draw down such Assistance as may Exalt and Sanctify our Natures. So that by Religion I mean, such a Sense of Divine Truths, as enter into a Man, and Becomes a Spring of a New Nature within Him, Reforming His Thoughts and Designs, Purifying His Heart, and Sanctifying Him, and governing his whole Deportment, His Words as well as his Actions ; convincing Him that it is not enough, not to be scandalously vicious, or to be innocent in His Conversation, but that he must be Entirely, uniformly and constantly

Pure

Pure, and Virtuous, Animating Him with a Zeal to be still better and better, more eminently Good and Exemplary, using Prayers and all outward Devotions, as solemn Acts testifying what he is inwardly and at Heart, and as Methods Instituted by GOD, to be still advancing in the Use of them further and further, into a more refined and spiritual Sense of Divine Matters. This is true Religion, which is the Perfection of Human Nature, and the Joy and Delight of every One that feels it Active and Strong within Him ; it is true, this is not arrived at all at once ; and it will have an unhappy Allay, hanging long even about a Good Man : But as these ill Mixtures are the perpetual Grief of His Soul, So it is his chief Care to Watch over and to mortify them ; He will be in a continual Progress, still gaining Ground upon himself ; and as He attains to a good Degree of Purity ; He will find a Noble Flame of Life and Joy growing upon Him. Of this I write with the more Concern and Emotion, because I have felt this the True, and indeed the only Joy which runs through a Man's Heart and Life : It is that which has been for many Years my greatest Support ; I rejoice daily in it ; I feel from it the earnest of that supreme Joy, which I pant and long for ; I am sure there is nothing else can afford any true or compleat Happiness. I have, considering my Sphere, seen a great deal of all that is most Shining and Tempting in this World : The Pleasures of Sense I did soon

Nauseate

Nauseate : Intrigues of State, and the Conduct of Affairs have something in them, that is more Specious ; and I was for some Years deeply immersed in these, but still with Hopes of Reforming the World, and of making Mankind wiser and better. But I have found, *That which is crooked cannot be made Straight*, Ecc. 1, 15. I acquainted myself with Knowledge and Learning, and that in a great variety, and with more Compaſſ than Depth, but *though wisdom excelleth Folly*, as much as *Light doth darkness*, Ecc. 2, 13. Yet, as it is a sore Travail, Ecc. 1. 13. it is so very defective that what is wanting to compleat it, cannot be numbered, v. 15. I have seen that Two were better than One, and that a three-fold Cord is not easily loosed, Ecc. 4. 12. And have therefore cultivated Friendship, with much Zeal and a disinterested Tenderness ; but I found this was only Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, though it be of the best and nobler Sort. So that upon Great and long Experience, I could enlarge on the Preachers Text, *Vanity of Vanities, and all is Vanity*, Ecc. 1. 2. But I must also conclude with him, fear God and keep the Commandments, *For this is the All of Man*, Ecc. 12. 13. The whole both of His Duty and Happiness. I do therefore End all, in the Words of David, of the Truth of which, upon great Experience, and a long Observation, I am so fully assured, I leave them as my last Words to Posterity, Come ye Children hearken unto Me : I will Teach you the Fear

of

of the LORD. What Man is he that desireth Life and Joveth many Days? That he may see Good, keep thy Tongue from Evil, and thy Lips from speaking Guile, Depart from Evil, and do Good; seek Peace and Pursue it, the Eyes of the Lord are upon the Righteous, and His Ears are open unto their Cry: But the Face of the Lord is against them that do Evil, to cut off the Remembrance of them from the Earth. The Righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their trouble, the Lord is nigh unto all that are of a broken Heart; and loveth such as be of a contrite Spirit, Psalm 34. 11 to 19. So far the BISHOP.

Saving Faith and its Effects, are as inseparable as Fire and Heat, which is Acts of Real Goodness to our fellow Mortals, influenced by the Precepts and Examples of Christ, His Business in this World was both to instruct Mankind, by His Words and Actions, who went about doing Good, Acts 10. and 38. He made His Conversation and Behaviour a President and Example which he enjoyned all his Disciples to Copy after; 'take my yoke upon you, says he, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart, and you shall find rest unto your Souls, for my Yoke is easy and my Burden is light, 11. 29. 30. I have given you an Example, that ye should do as I have done to you. John 13. 15. For whosoever shall Do God's Commandments, and Teach them, the same shall be called Great in the Kingdom of Heaven. M. 5 19. THEREFORE

He is the Best Preacher whose Life is the Text,
And that is the Pulpit where He speaketh Next.



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